

## to you everything i bestow by expensivefate

**Category:** IT (2017), IT - Stephen King, Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Alternate Universe - College/University, Drug Use, F/F, House Party, Inspired by Romeo and Juliet, M/M, Other Additional Tags to Be Added, Platonic Relationships, Trans Male Character, its stan

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Dustin Henderson, Eddie Kaspbrak, Eleven (Stranger Things), Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Hanlon, Mike Wheeler, Richie Tozier, Stanley Uris, Will Byers

**Relationships:** Bill Denbrough/St Stanley Uris, Dustin Henderson/Lucas Sinclair, Eleven (Stranger Things)/Beverly Marsh, Other Relationship Tags to Be Added, Will Byers/Mike Wheeler, Will Byers/Richie Tozier

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**Summary:**

The University of Chicago where our story takes place.

Three separate groups of friends.

In which two hate each other,

Two people are fighting for the same guy.

Determined to win him over.

The first party of their third year is going to bring them all together,

More specifically two people who have yet to meet,

Until tonight.

So let us tell the story of these thirteen people, and what their night will entail.

Those of you who are patient enough to learn of this one night,

Enjoy.



# 1. Chapter 1

## Author's Note:

this is my first ever proper fic im posting on here and  
ever really  
so im kinda shitting it but i hope you all like it

and thanks so much to lo for looking through it and  
editing any slip ups or bad grammar

Richie Tozier always loved to make a grand entrance no matter what scene awaited him behind the closed door. He liked to make himself known, to have the attention drawn on himself, even if only for a second. He liked to elicit a reaction, and 9 times out of 10 he did.

The times in which he didn't were when the room was occupied by Bill, who no longer messed himself when Richie flung a door open and let it smack against the wall, which is exactly how he barged into their shared dorm room just then. Bill, who was currently too focused on aggressively typing away on his laptop, hadn't acknowledged him at all. The loud noise was supposed to have gotten his attention, like it always did with everyone else, but Richie had overestimated and subsequently cursed himself when he remembered this was Bill Denbrough, his best friend since he was 9 years old and had dealt with Richie's incessant loudness. The word *quiet* was very obviously not in his vocabulary.

"We are going to a party tonight, Big Bill." *Big Bill*, a nickname that Richie gifted Bill the day that they met. Bill was the one who announced the game they were playing. He was the leader of their group, the Big Man who made all the decisions. Well, except for right now, of course.

"No, we are not", Bill stated still focusing on the assignment that Richie was almost positive was due on Monday. Richie brought up a balled fist and then brought it down onto the desk with a loud bang.

"Yes we *are* . It's our destiny. Our *future* , Billiam." He spoke overdramatically and Bill rolled his eyes.

"Correction: *You* are going to a party tonight, and *I* am staying here to finish this assignment because it's due in two days and I have done none of it, then I will come get you at some ungodly hour of the night, and bring you back here to put you to bed." Bill pointed to Richie then himself on the words he spoke with emphasis. Richie, out of sheer annoyance, pressed the power button and closed the lid of Bill's laptop.

"Oh, you are so lucky that auto-save was on, Tozier." Richie waved off his remark before turning to face him again.

"Whatever. Anyway, you have to come, you're my wingman." Richie paused after smacking his friend's shoulder with the back of his hand before continuing, ".... And Beverly Marsh will be there,"

Bill ignores the mention of the girl he'd been crushing on since last year and sighs. "When have I ever been your wingman, Rich?"

"Well, never really, but that's because I don't need you. I'm already a catch." Richie grinned and Bill continued to give him the same blank look, obviously unconvinced.

"Oh, come on, Bill! Please?" Richie begged, dragging out the 'e' for an annoying amount of time.

Bill took a minute to think about it, chewing the inside of cheek and looking at Richie who had his hands clasped together in a plea and his eyes full of optimism.

Bill huffed. He was going to regret this.

“Fine, but only so you stop annoying me.” Richie’s face lit up immediately and he jumped into Bill’s lap, peppering his face with kisses and a *thank you* in between each of them.

“Get off me, you dick.” Although the phrase was spoken with annoyance, Bill said it while letting out a small laugh. Richie got off of Bill, declaring that he was going over to Lucas and Dustin’s dorm so that Bill could do more of his “stupid assignment” and be left alone. Richie knew the only way a room could be quiet and peaceful was if he just left.

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Richie entered the room a few hours later with the same slamming of the door to announce his presence before looking to Bill, who was pulling a baseball tee over his head to wear to the party.

“Oh, did I not say it was fancy dress”. Bill groaned immediately as he turned around and gave Richie a look that said *no, you fucking didn’t*.

“It’s fine, I have something for you to wear.”

“Oh yeah, and what’s that?” He folded his arms and prepared himself for what Richie was going to pull out, and honestly, it wasn't anyway near as bad as what he was expecting, given he never knew *what* to expect with him. When Richie pulled out cheap-looking, plastic, silver armour, he realised what he had pulled out was an outfit to be—

“A knight. You want me to be a knight?” The taller of the two tilted his head to the side.

“Well, yeah. You’re already *my* knight in shining armor, Billford.” Richie said, fluttering his eyelashes. “So why not go all the way? You can just wear some jeans underneath, and borrow one of my black shirts.” Bill took the armour out of his grip and studied it before he looked up to see Richie bent down again, rummaging through his drawers.

“And what is it that you’ll be dressing up as, my dear Richard?” The other boy stood up straight, turning around to face Bill and lifting up a cheap and extremely knotted wig, along with what seemed to be an equally cheap sequin bralet and mini skirt.

“I, *my dear Billy* , am going the best drag queen the world has ever seen. I’m gonna fuck with the heads of every straight person there.” A sigh escaped Bill’s lips and he pinched the bridge of his nose with the hand that wasn't holding his “costume” before chuckling at just how fucking ridiculous his best friend could *actually* be.

“You fuck with everyone’s head, Rich. And not in the good way,”

\*

Truth be told, Stan hadn't gone to many parties since he started college. He had his fair share, though Stan's definition of fair was seven, but in comparison to his friends it was nothing. Beverly Marsh, Max Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, hell even *Eddie Kaspbrak* went to more parties than him and he was **Eddie**, for christs sake. They'd gone to at least one every month since freshers week, and once every month they would try and convince Stan to come.

That was exactly what Mike was trying to achieve, albeit miserably, as Stan continued reading the book that he held in his hands. There was no way Mike, of all them, was going to be able to convince him. Their personalities tended to clash, and not in the best way.

It wasn't that they weren't friends, of course they were. Stan and Mike were best friends, just not the *we click together* kind of friends, they were more *you're best friends with my best friends, so i guess that makes you one of my best friends* and they were fine with that.

After a while, Mike gave up trying to convince him and shouted for Eddie to come and help.

Eddie emerged from the bathroom that he and Stan shared, along with their dorm room. He hummed with both his eyebrows raised, wiping away the droplets of water at the corner of his mouth before going over to place his empty plastic cup on his bedside table.

"I'm trying to get Stan to come to that party tonight, but he's not having any of it." Mike spoke exasperatedly, throwing his hands up

in the air for dramatic emphasis. Eddie sighed immediately, knowing that the only reason he was called was to aid Mike in his convincing.

“If he doesn't want to go, he doesn't have to, and he doesn't even have a costume.” This was the usual amount of input that Eddie gave, although Mike assumed that this time, due to the circumstances, he would have been helpful, but he was severely mistaken. It was now Mike's turn to sigh at the obvious forgetfulness of his best friend and the promise the two, as well as Jane and Max, had made to a certain someone earlier that day.

*“Will Stan be coming to the party tonight?”*

*“Of course!” Jane replied almost instantly while the other three nodded their heads eagerly.*

*“Cool! I guess I'll see you all later then,” As he turned and walked away the five of them looked at each other, realising that they had promised that Stanley Uris, the boy who almost never went to parties, was going to come to the one commencing later on that night. It almost sounded like a joke.*

*“How the fuck are we going to get Stan to the party?”*

“Eddie, remember who we spoke to earlier today,” Eddie's eyes widened and Mike knew that the smaller boy was starting to remember the events that occurred only a few hours earlier. It was then that Stan's interest was peaked as he closed his book and placed it beside him before raising his eyebrows at Eddie.

“Who'd you talk to?” Intrigue clearly laced in his question.



“Mike Hanlon asked about you,” He rushed out. “Asked if you were coming to the party.” He said, chewing on his bottom lip as he waited for the curly-headed boy’s reply and hoping– just *hoping* – that it might convince him to come.

“Mike ‘*captain of the football team* ’ Hanlon asked about *me* ?” An amused tone in his voice and his eyebrow raised in disbelief.

A “Yes” was heard from the other end of the room, where Jane and Max both stood in the doorway. Jane stepped forward before continuing. “And I said you were coming, so you have to come.”

Stan hummed. There was *one* more thing that he could say to get out of going to the party, and as much Eddie hoped mentioning Mike Hanlon would convince him to come, Stan hoped this excuse would get him out of the whole ordeal.

“But Eddie literally *just* said a minute ago that I don’t have a costume. It’s a costume party. It would be totally *barbaric* of me to show up and not have one on.” And yes the word *barbaric* was absolutely necessary because Stan was overdramatic and *really* wasn’t interested in going to this party.

“Ah! Say no more,” Max stepped through the doorway, tossing a plastic bag onto his lap. “You still have that pair of white jeans, right? Just borrow that white t-shirt that Mike has, but never wears, and then we can put some pretty glitter on top of your cheeks.” They had this all planned out, undoubtedly never giving up hope that Stan would actually join them when going to a party, a costume party at that. Stan opened the plastic bag as Max continued to talk and pulled out a pair of pure white feather wings and headband which had a

halo on top.

For a second he forgot that the costume was supposed to be an angel as he lightly traced the wings feathers interpreting it as a costume of something else: a bird.

Stan let out a breath he didn't even know he was holding as he looked up at his friend's five faces, all staring at him anticipatngly.

"Fine. Fine, I'll come." All five faces lit up as Max replied, rather loudly he could add, "You will?"

"Yes, but only on the conditions that it will shut you all up, and you won't try to drag me to the the next ten parties."

The all exchanged glances before nodding.

"Deal."

\*

"He's coming to the party," Mike directed at Bev who sat to his left as she smoked a cigarette.

Before she had the chance to reply, Ben Hanscom stepped outside

holding in one hand a stack of red solo cups and in the other the same except blue. "Who's coming to the party?"

"Stanley Uris"

The look of confusion on Ben's face at the name mentioned in Beverly's reply clearly indicated he had no idea who that was. With that Bev extended on her answer, "Mike's been obsessed with him for weeks now. Cute jewish guy, curly hair, bit of a tragic, preppy fashion sense." Ben's face turned to one of realisation at the simple, but yet oddly specific and accurate, description of Mike's new crush.

"Isn't he best friends with Michael Wheeler?" Ben questioned, and Bev was interrupted yet again as Will Byers began walking towards them, catching none of the conversation but the last sentence. "What about Mike?" It was then the *other* Mike who started to laugh at the pure irony of the situation. Will raised his eyebrow in response.

"It's just funny that you showed up at the mention of Wheeler," This caused a snicker to erupt from both Ben and Bev, who stopped as soon as Will shot them a glare. His glare morphed into a questioning look with his eyebrows furrowed slightly as he then turned his head to towards Mike asking rather defensively "What does that mean?"

"Oh come on! Are you serious? *What does that mean?* He's been running after you since last year. Along with that Tozier. It's like a full out war between the twins." He spoke in exaggeration.

Will scoffed, turning his face away in a fruitless attempt to hide the blush that now rested upon his cheeks before speaking just above a

whisper “They’re not twins, they just happen to look alike and they are not *fighting* over me.”

Bev stubbed out her cigarette in the ashtray before standing up and walking over to Will, ruffling his hair and smiling empathically down at him. “Whatever you say, Willy.” Before turning on her heel and walking back inside the house that Mike and Ben shared with a few other boys on the football team.

The rest of them followed her into the house, Ben looked down at his hands again remembering why had stepped outside in the first place.

“Guys, should we have red solo cups or blue solo cups becau—”

“Red,” Mike choses at the same time Will replies “Blue.”

They both look at other another for a second before turning around to face Bev, who was obviously the last verdict. She simply shrugged, “Red? I don't know, does it really matter?” Ben looks back down at the cups in his hands before saying “I’ll just use both,” And setting them down on the kitchen counter.

Will spoke up again, bringing the attention back to his own dilemma, except his dilemma wasn't about choosing which colour solo cups to use, it was about the two boys who were both after him. Along with the thought that we might have to *choose* one of them over the other. He could have continued to talk about it, but decided against it last minute as he wasn't prepared for what his friends were going to ask and say to him. Therefore, he diverted the conversation back to Ben. Although not about the solo cups.

“Please, can we push all of this this Tozier versus Wheeler aside so we can talk about the *real* problem here. Ben, are you planning on getting with anyone at the party?”

A secret—that wasn’t really much of a secret—was that Ben Hanscom had never actually seriously dated anyone, and he never got with many people at parties either. He wasn’t the sort of guy, he wanted a serious relationship, not some two week, college fling. He thought that, surely, in their third year of college people would have matured enough to want the same, yet here he was; still single.

There was only ever two people that Ben had ever properly crushed on. One of whom was none other than Beverly Marsh herself. He knew that the first moment he saw her, he was gone. Ben made it his mission to befriend her, which wasn’t very difficult since they clicked together so well. There was a catch, however when he finally mustered up the courage to confess his feelings through a poem he had written himself, she figured out it was him right away. When she then went on to reject him, he was heartbroken. It wasn’t until 8 months later she told him the reason why she did it.

The other “crush” was definitely a secret, one that he would keep to himself until he was on this deathbed because *no one* could know who he was currently crushing on.

Ben thought back to those moments during freshman year when Bev had confronted him, holding the postcard with the college logo on one side and Ben’s poem the other. The rejection had him so embarrassed that it took him almost a year to get over it.

“I’ve kind of given up trying to find someone to date since Miss Marsh here turned me down.”

“Ben, how many times have I told you I didn't turn you down because you're unattractive. I turned you down because I'm a lesbian.” She explained as she hopped up on the counter before Will stepped over and nestled himself between her legs. Will's back was to Bev's front and his arms were folded across his chest as they both watched Ben then fling his own up into the air in frustration.

“I know, I know, but I just give up trying, you know? What if I hit on someone and she's gay, or he's straight. I have the worst gaydar ever.” He looked down at the ground with a pout.

Bev started playing with Will's hair, attempting to curl it around her finger to no avail since it just loosened in the twirling of her fingers and fell back into its place on Will's head like silk. His hair was just too straight and thin to really do much with it. It just stayed in the style that it was cut in, products never really worked in his hair either, not that it bothered him much. As long as he wasn't still sporting the awful bowl cut he had throughout his early teen years.

Beverly sighed as she gave up trying to do anything to Will's hair and just rested her chin on top of his head as Will responded to the boy who was currently in a huff over his shit gaydar.

“Ben, if you keep stressing out you aren't gonna find anyone”

The reappearance of Mike's deep voice in the conversation caused Ben to lift his head.

“You know what? I have a feeling that tonight’s the night, Benjamin.”

## 2. Chapter 2

### Summary for the Chapter:

The three friendship groups are still getting ready to go to the party.

Stan gets a talk from his friends about Mike Hanlon, Will has a bit of a breakdown and Richie's a little shit.

### Notes for the Chapter:

hello sorry this chapter has taken so long to be updated but i hope its worth the wait

anyway this is just some more of the three friendship groups together, they will all start to mingle with each other and stuff in the next chapter as they will all be at the party by that point.

"What if this isn't a good idea Michael. I mean this is Stan we are talking about here, he isn't exactly the most romantic person and he certainly isn't the person to *hook up* at parties."

"From what I hear Mike Hanlon isn't looking for a *hookup* . Anyway, Stanley is 20 years old and he hasn't dated a single person. Ever. Probably the reason as to why he is so rowdy all the time."

"Well you've dated people and you're still...." Eddie hesitates to complete the sentence, worried that it could rub Mike off in the wrong way and he honestly couldn't be bothered to deal with *emo Mike Wheeler* all night long; it still had the possibility of happening anyway if Richie Tozier and Will Byers were both there.

"I dare you to finish that sentence, Kaspbrak." Eddie turned in on



himself at the harshness in Mike's voice. During the awkward moment of silence Eddie held in a breath, he should have bit the bullet and not tried to make a quip in the first place. It was hit and miss with Mike sometimes depending on the mood he was in.

"Don't look so terrified I'm joking, I know I'm a moody bitch," Eddie let out the breath that he was holding in turning it into a form of nervous giggle, relief washing over him as his shoulders relaxed simultaneously.

This hushed whispered between the two were left unheard by the rest of the group as Jane and Max were in the process of putting the glitter on top of Stan's cheek, doing one each. Stan looked over at the two boys briefly trying to decipher any of the conversation but the only things he could somewhat pick up on was that short moment in which Eddie looked terrified under Mike's gaze. Only to relax a few seconds later as Mike said something again although this time through an amused smirk.

Yet still he feels like he gets a jist of what they must have been talking about—talking about *him* and *the most popular and handsome guy at their college* —as they both turn around to look at him. Immediately, he makes eye contact with the both of them as he had already been looking at them trying to figure out what they must be saying about him. Mike hadn't gotten rid of the amused smirk on his face as he folds his arms and leans against the desk at the opposite end of the dorm room, which so happened to be Eddie's, he clears his throat before speaking up.

"So, what are your thoughts on Hanlon, then?" Stan gives him an uncomprehending stare, not having broken eye contact with him since Mike had turned around a few minutes before. Noticing the tension, Eddie himself jumps into the conversation and declares his

input. Contrasting to just a few hours or so before when Mike had literally asked Eddie to help with talking to Stan and getting him to come to the party, with the smaller being no help whatsoever. In the end it had really been Jane and Max to convince him to go, *or more like forced so to speak* .

"Well, I must say that he *is* pretty fucking fine. Honestly, if there was a machine to make the perfect man, Mike Hanlon would be the one to come out."

"What do you say?" It was only a matter of time before Max herself spoke up and gave her own input and opinion on the topic. Stan's head turned to the side to look at her awaiting what she was going to go on and say next. "You think that maybe you could like him? Like after a few dates and getting to know him and stuff? When you see him tonight at the party, go and talk to him, dance with him." She stopped to take a breath and look Stan in the eyes. "Like just look at him and imagine what it would be like to date the loveable, charming, kind, and incredibly attractive captain of the football team." He turns his head the other way knowing full well that Jane would have something to add onto Max's, completely out of character, mini-speech.

"Maybe by dating him you are doing no less than helping to discover who you are."

Stan's face turns into one of disgust at the cringe monologues everyone seemed to be throwing at him. That was, until he actually started to think about it all, about what they had *all* said to him. His eyebrows furrow as a plethora of different thoughts decide to tumble into his head all at once.

Although both girls had really only decided to speak up on their thought in a thoughtful manner, they were both very opinionated. Honestly *everyone* in their little friendship group was opinionated; well, minus Eddie when in regards to Stan's love life.

Which then only resulted in constant debates between them all, which meant more arguments, which meant they most likely fell out with each other more than any other friendship group, but in all honesty, they loved that they all had different views and opinions on things. They loved each other no matter how many times that they squabble and clash.

So Stan knew that even if he ended up dismissing all of their attempts on getting him to date, and if he didn't end up speaking to Mike Hanlon at the party tonight, they'd still love him. Sure, they would probably be pissed at him for a hot second, but they would respect his decision because they knew he didn't like to go out of his comfort zone too much or too often. They would never try and push him too hard.

Even if *other* Mike sometimes tended to push a bit too much sometimes. He'd know he was wrong and that he shouldn't have done it and then apologise to Stan. Which was something Mike Wheeler didn't do very often, but when it came to Stan and his other friends he would never not say sorry.

As Stan pondered his thoughts, he had a notion: maybe he had not evolved into his "*true self*", scoffing mentally as he said it in his head. Having never dated anyone before, he didn't know a number of things. What it was like to be in a relationship. How different it would make him act. What it was like to feel loved and appreciated. This would be where Jane would say "*like you deserve to be*".

Mike brings him out of his reverie with his voice. "Answer quickly, do you think you could like him?"

Hesitating slightly, Stan's eyes dart around everyone in the room before looking at the ground and then back up to Mike, squinting at him. "I mean, I'll talk to him tonight at the party, but I can't guarantee that I'm going to be all over him by the end of the night. Things just don't work that way in real life."

*If only Stan knew that would be exactly what would happen tonight, although it wasn't going to be with Mike Hanlon.*

The other boy rose his eyebrows as his eyes widened and pursed his lips as if to say *alrighty then* before he reaches behind him to pick up something off the desk, placing the devil horns on top of his wavy raven hair, Stan mentally slaps himself at forgetting that Mike's costume was the complete opposite to his own.

Mike Wheeler was dressed as the devil and Stan Uris was dressed as an angel. Their costumes now making seem as though it was purposeful, that the two of them were matching.

"Did you really have to dress as *that* . It looks like we are going to the party as a couple."

"I think you'll find I'm the wrong Mike you're going after," Stan gives another unimpressed look at Mike's bantering. "We'll just stay away from each at the party, okay? Will that stop stressing out you so

much?" It was a rhetorical question because everyone knew the answer was: yes. It would stop ‘ *stressing Stan out so much* ’.

“Okay, we are all done.” Jane turns Stans face towards her, looking over his features, more specifically his cheeks to check if it looked good. It did and so she smiled triumphantly before standing up and walking towards the mirror hanging on the wall. Checking her appearance over and adjusting the space buns either side of her head, Mike comes up behind her and he adjusts his horns, making sure that they aren't skewed. They smile at each other briefly in the mirror, before Mike turns around and heads towards the door, holding it open waiting for the rest of them to gather themselves and leave the dorm room. Jane walks out of the room standing in the hallway, noticing that other people were too now leaving their dorms dressed in costumes. This was going to be a very big and crowded party.

It was now Eddie's turn to look in the mirror, turning around to observe his costume from the back and straightening out the back of his skirt with his hand. Max teasingly smacks him on the backside earning a speaked ‘ *Hey!* ’ from him. They both pass Mike holding the door and stand outside with Jane.

Stan was left.

He didn't want to look at himself in the mirror because he knew if he did, he'd find something wrong with his outfit and hold the rest of them up. Which he didn't want to do. Grabbing his wings and putting them on, he takes over holding the door from Mike, flicking his light on and off 3 times before shutting the door, satisfied and somewhat calm.

“Okay then. Lets go” Max says already ahead of the rest of them.

Will looked at himself in the reflection of the mirror, checking over his costume and playing with his hair. Although, he didn't need to; he was going to be wearing a mask the whole night, unless it happened to get hot. He looks at the flimsy material of the mask before using his hands to stretch it out so he can put it over his head. He smiled at himself, although he couldn't see it and neither could Ben as he opened the door to his bedroom and walked up to him.

“Can you actually see anything out of that mask?” he asked, putting on his sheriff badge, and playing with it until it looked perfectly centred. “I mean kind of, I’m not like suddenly blind or anything,” His voice was muffled by the mask making it kind of hard for Ben to understand what he was saying, but just like his sight, it wasn't *too* bad. However, it may get that way later on in the night when everyone was drunk or high, making it hard for them to concentrate as easily. The music would also be too loud for anyone to hear him.

Maybe he wanted that though, maybe he wanted to be invisible and undetected as Will Byers for the night. Maybe, just maybe, that would make it seem like to he wasn't there. Richie Tozier and Mike Wheeler would try and look for him, and when they've admitted defeat and think that maybe he isn't there, they would both stop thinking about him and enjoy themselves.

Will wasn't a massive fan of attention, it made him uncomfortable and anxious, that every one of his movements and choices had to be chosen carefully. That doesn't mean he didn't like either of the boys. They both talked to him and waited on him hand and foot, especially Richie. Will just thinks Mike is a little bit more stubborn, but he wasn't any less kind to him.

Last year had been, well, certainly something. By the end of it both boys had been fighting for his affections, which only strengthened the somehow already existing rivalry between the two. Will himself had no idea why they had already taken a disliking to each other, but he had made it worse.

Will hated attention, yes, but he hated conflict more.

Summer break had been an escape for him really, he could go back to Hawkins and spend it with his mom and brother. They were an extremely close family and so he told them everything that had happened in his second year of college. Jonathan, his brother, had already known parts of it due to the times Will had called him clearly tense about something.

*“ Well, I’d say you’re one lucky man having two guys going after you. Sure never happened to me in college ”* is what Jonathan wanted to say to him. Opting against it when he listened to Will on the other line, and listened to how much the whole ordeal was stressing him out.

When he had told his mom, she too almost congratulated him, because when he lived in Hawkins he was only gay kid his age for miles. Which, being the 21st century was honestly a surprise, but if you visited Hawkins you’d understand.

The same was for Jonathan but when he got to college, there was even a committee for people like him and Will. He remembers that phone call too, when he was so excited to tell Will, he was practically bursting with happiness. So when he told his younger brother there was an LGBT+ committee at his college and that he felt so happy, no

longer feeling so alone and like an outcast.

Will had never wanted to go to college more in his life.

Now back to Joyce Byers, who had listened to Will and replied with some advice that he really wanted to take into consideration here.

“If both of these boys really like you Will, if you were more important to them than just beating the other, they’d take the time to know you. Meaning they’d know you aren’t comfortable with this and that you don’t like putting them against each other”

That stuck in his head for the rest of the summer, if they were going to be immature and continue to make him feel bad, he’d tell them to stop and leave him alone. He’d tell his friends to stop too.

Stop the teasing, stop making it feel like he had to choose.

The feeling of his body involuntary turning brought him out of his thoughts as Bev stood in front of him, eyeing up his costume. “I have to say, you’re the most attractive Spider-Man yet.” She can’t see the blush that begins to surface on his cheeks and he’s almost glad that she can’t as it would cause a teasing and extremely drawn out cooing on her part.

“Even more than Tom Holland,” He wondered if Bev knew what he had said through the mask. She gives a small smile and he realizes she did hear him. Either that, or he just *that* predictable and she



pieced the sentence together herself.

Through a fond laugh she says “Yes Will. Even more than Tom Holland.”

His smiles soon fades again as he pulls off the mask, his hair was now disheveled and random strands stuck up in odd places, some covering his eyes. Haphazardly moving it out of his face, he carried himself to Ben's bed and slumped on the edge. Bev looks at him sadly, moving to him and kneeling in front of him, she says his name sympathetically. He raises his head from staring at his fidgeting hands perched in his lap.

When he couldn't talk to Jonathan about things, he'd talk to her.

“Hey, I'm sorry if our teasing earlier made you upset.” Using a soft and hushed tone contrasting to the loud and hard music the was on the other side of the door. He wanted to say it was fine and that she didn't need worry, but it did upset him, even if it was only a little bit. He just didn't want to say that because it really would've shown how and vulnerable he was, and this year he was supposed to be strong, not take any shit, and not let it get to him.

“I mean, it was inevitable, I think. I'm used to it”

What Beverly didn't understand about Will was why he didn't say the things he was thinking, she thought that with Ben as well to be fair, and Mike sometimes, yet she thought about the trait with Will the most, he would get this look on his face whenever he wanted to say something and every time she would think that *this* was it, he was

finally going to speak up and stand up for himself, it never happened.

*“This year,” Will told her. “This year I’m gonna be different.”*

But what he didn't know was that if he embraced being sensitive or vulnerable, and stopped trying to conceal it, because as of then he'd been doing it pretty poorly, and he took pride in who he was, he *would* be able to stand up for himself.

She wanted to tell him that, but he had to figure that out on his own, and he would with time. Although she wasn't going to tell him that specifically, Bev wasn't going to stop herself from telling him something, pushing him a little in the right direction.

“If someone is doing something you don't like, or acting a certain way that makes you uncomfortable, tell them okay? I know you want to, and you said yourself this year you're want to be different; tell them to stop, no matter whether its me, mike or ben, or your lecturer, or your mom. Anyone. You don't have to put up with feeling bad about yourself because you think you're weak. You're not. Okay, Will?”

The way Bev smiles at him after she says this makes him want to cry, and he tries so hard not to, even though he knows she wouldn't mind, but he can't be crying at a party for Christ's sake.

He sighs, knowing there's an evident welling in his eyes. Bev can see them watering and the tears threatening to spill. Will closes his eyes, willing them to go away and nodding his head to let her know that he understood everything she was telling him.

His adam's apple bobs as he swallows thickly and he opens his eyes to look at at Bev again; sweet and fierce Bev, who takes shit from no one and doesn't care what anyone might say about her. The complete opposite to himself. Mike and Ben were his bestfriends and he loved both of them with his whole heart, but Beverly Marsh was different. He very strongly believed she was his platonic soulmate. He would go to the ends of the earth for her and would do anything she asked of him.

“You gonna be alright with me not hanging around you tonight? I mean you can if you want to, but I'm gonna be with the girlfriend and I don't-”

“I'll be fine, Ben and I can stick together. Unless he leaves me.” He drifts off, but he shakes his head briefly, banning the thoughts out of his head. “Love the costume, by the way.” At the mention of her attire, Bev looks down at and adjusts her makeshift holster. It nearly looked like a real one due to her undeniable skills when it came to clothes and accessories. Smiling brightly, she tugs on her vest proudly. “Thanks, I mean I was worried it would turn out bad. I don't know anything about Star Wars,”

“Oh, the things you do for love.” Will expressed in a teasing manner before she shoves his shoulder playfully and starts standing up. She kisses the top of his head and sighs as she exits her friend's bedroom.

He began to fiddle again with his fingers, stopping abruptly with a slight groan and a shake of his head. *Stop being so ridiculous* , he chides himself . He couldn't spend the whole night cooped up in Ben's room, psyching himself out over the smallest things. He wouldn't allow it. And neither would his friends, so he felt to the side

of him for his mask and stood up. Walking back over to the mirror to flatten out his hair as much as possible and putting the mask back over his face.

*“Okay, this is your one night to not be Will Byers. Don’t mess it up”*

\*

“Where’s Richie?”

Bill whips his head around to turn to Lucas who was looking at him quizzically. “Oh, he said he’d meet us here, apparently he had to pick something up.” Lucas raises his right eyebrow, almost disapprovingly, knowing exactly what Richie must have gone to get. Himself, Bill and Dustin were currently waiting outside the house that the party was being held in. College kids were already filtering inside, where the thumping of music could be heard and the changing of coloured lights could be seen through the windows.

“Hey, isn’t that Victor Criss, what the hell is he doing here? He doesn’t even go here anymore.” The others follow Dustin’s eye line towards the graduate whom he had just spotted. Bill sends a glare towards the boy with the bleached blonde hair, who had his hand rested against the outside of the house as he spoke to a girl who looked surprisingly interested in the conversation.

“I don’t kn–”

“What’s up, fuckers!” Richie shouts at them. He walks, or more like

trots in his platform shoes, lifting his arms into the air and cackling as he walks towards the rest of his group. A whisper of, *oh my fucking god*, could be heard from under Dustin's breath as he stares with wide unbelieving eyes at the man who was in the process of reapplying the red lipstick already smothered on, and slightly around his mouth.

Richie claps both Dustin and Lucas on the shoulder blade before wrapping his arms around Bill's shoulders and shaking him.

"We are gonna have you dancing tonight, Big Bill." Bill lets out a sardonic laugh, nodding his head side to side and reaching his hand over to remove Richie's from his shoulders, taking a few steps away from him.

"No, no, no, no. I'm not dancing. I'm not in the mood, Rich. You guys can dance all you want, but I'm just gonna- I don't know, grab a drink and sit down or something".

"Get that stick out of your arse. I get it you're in a mood because you're a poor, sexually frustrated, lonely, single boy who just wants to get his assignment done, but lighten the fuck up!" Bill just rolls his eyes at Richie, not wanting to argue as it would then only put himself, Richie and the other two in a tense situation, which was not what any of them wanted. His eyes end up landing on his other friends giving them a look as if to say "*Why do we put with his ass*".

Dustin grabs Lucas' hand, interlocking their fingers and beginning to tug him away from the other two "We'll see you guys inside." Bill nods and Richie looks over his shoulder pursing his lips and waves daintily at them "See y'all boys later!" He says in a shrill southern accent.

His body posture goes back to normal and brings his attention back to Bill, lifting up a finger "Ah! Wait a minute, I have something for you." Reaching inside his bra, Bill's face scrunches up as he does so, bringing out a very small clear plastic bag with something inside. Bill doesn't let him explain what's in the bag, he knows already.

Now, don't fret this wasn't a regular occurrence between the two. It was more of a tradition, if you will. It had started on the first year of college and at the first college party they had every gone to, they then did it again last year and now they would do it again this year. Together. Although, it wasn't something that Lucas and Dustin joined in on, it was the reason as to why they had just walked away leaving the other two alone.

"I fuh-feel like something's going to happen t-tonight," He gulps as he says this, his almost non-existent stutter emerging to signify his uneasiness. He wasn't quite sure whether the 'something' that is going to happen is going to be good or bad.

"Well well, I never marked you down as a psychic." Richie remarks before continuing.

"Look, tonight we are going to have fun, okay? We are gonna take these, they'll kick in and then everything will be fine and dandy. You'll drink and we'll party and after that you can go find Bev Marsh and profess your undying love using that adorable stutter of yours," He declares excitedly, pinching Bill's cheek at the mention of Bev and his stutter. His eyes shined and his trashmouth spread into a wide grin.

It falls as Richie studies Bill's face which was still fixed in a glazed expression. Richie's smile turns tight-lipped, removing his hands from where they were shaking Bill with every word he spoke, to flop down to his sides. He turns his head to look towards the front door of the house, and Bill can see his tongue run over his teeth before darting out and licking his painted lips, he groans before twisting his head back around to face his best friend. The expression of Richie's face changes completely into one of unamusement. As if his mood could be changed with the flick of a switch.

"You know what, Denbrough? I'm actually getting really tired of your mopey ass all the fucking time—"

Richie then began to ramble about Bill's 'bad' mood and unrequited love, in a rather harsh and gradual aggressive tone. It honestly puzzled Bill, as the longer Richie went on the less it began to sound like he was even speaking about him anymore. Okay, he could admit that maybe Riche was kind of correct on the being mopey part, but he wasn't like that *all* the time, it was just on occasions like this where the other had would drag him to a party when in reality all he wanted and needed to do was finish his coursework. Adding to that, Richie *knew* it aggravated Bill when he made his grand propositions when Bill (and Richie) needed to get on with the work, that being the reason they were at college in the first place.

Another point he then made to himself was that although he has had a crush on Bev for a while now, it never really got him down that often, barely at all even. It was more of a lowkey thing, casual, she was cute and seemingly cool and a bit of a badass, that was pretty much it. It was Richie that had to go and blow it out of proportion and made it a bigger deal than it actually was.

The thing was Bill's inkling was right, he wasn't speaking about him.

Richie had begun to unknowingly speak about himself, his emotions clearly getting the better of him. They did sometimes. Richie was disclosing and keeping it hush-hush that he was the one moping all the time, it just didn't seem that way because of how good he'd gotten at hiding it. Richie liked someone. He *really* liked someone, not like how Bill "liked" Beverly Marsh.

Everyone knew about it, knew who it was that Richie liked, but no one knew how much it was affecting him. Even his best friend who was standing only a metre away, didn't know, as he looked at Richie with panic behind his eyes as Richie was flinging his arms around in rage and almost shouting at this point.

Grabbing his wrists, Bill forces Richie to look at him, the contact making the boy in the skimpy outfit flinch a little before his movements stop. Along with his words, his jagged breaths begin to slow themselves down as he looks at Bill's face and into his eyes.

"Calm down. Alright, Rich? Okay, we don't have to go to this party if you're feeling bad again."

Again, that flick of a switch happens and Richie's face completely transforms expressions as he now has the same grin as below plastered on his face. "I'm fine," There's an exchanged look between the two, Bill's full of uncertainty and scepticism and his best friend's, which was one of reassurance. "I *promise*, I'm fine".

Letting go of his wrists gently, Bill's intense worried stare softens, although not completely as he isn't entirely convinced by Richie and his *promise*. But when he looked at Richie, properly looked at him, he stupidly trusted him and his words anyway though, because Bill trusts Richie with his whole life and if Richie really was bad he



would give more of an indication. Bill would take him straight home if he knew that Richie was putting on an act right now; he wasn't. So Bill trusted him.

He gets pulled away from his thoughts as the plastic bag is waved close in front of his face, to the point where he couldn't see anything else but Richies painted face and ridiculous wig distorted by the transparent material. "Anyway, we've got something to do." Richie declares in a sing-song voice.

Pulling it away from Bill's face he open up the small bag and took one of the pills looking at the small little red heart with an arrow going through it before opening his mouth and placing it on his tongue. Anticipatingly, Bill stared at him wondering why he was taking so long to give him *his* pill, if he was being told to enjoy tonight he wanted to go inside as soon as possible. He was sick of being outside already. After another few seconds, Richie finally put his finger back inside the bag picking up the other pill with his finger. Bill opens his mouth and sticks out his tongue but just before Richie places it there, his finger moves away from his face.

To place the pill on his own tongue again.

For a split second Bill wanted to shout at Richie " *Are you insane?*" Having no idea what could happen to him if he took both of the pills and he wasn't willing to fine out. He may also have been pissed at the fact he took both, leaving Bill with no form of high to prepare him for the night he was about to have. For the *something* that he knew was going to happen. Then the second after he realised exactly what Richie was doing.

He was being a little shit.

He had pulled his tongue back into his mouth but the white and red pill was still visible and placed perfectly in the centre as he kept his lips parted. The corners of his mouth were turned up into a shit eating grin and his eyes sparkled with mischief.

Another sigh escaped from Bill for god knows how many times he had done so today so far. Rolling his eyes, he hoped that this would be the last sigh and the last eye roll that he did at Richie's antics tonight. At anyone or anything really.

*“ Lighten the fuck up, ”* He heard Richie's voice from earlier play in his head.

The next thing Bill does is grab Richie's face in his hands and goes straight into an opened mouth kiss, not giving Richie the satisfaction he deserves. He moves the pill from Richie's mouth to his own with ease, leaving Richie with hardly any moment to react and deepen the kiss like Bill knew he would.

As said before: Richie Tozier was a little shit.

It was now Bill's turn to wear the shit eating grin as Richie whined at the fact Bill wasn't playing along with him, but merely playing his own game.

*“Come on then, trashmouth.”* He called over his shoulder already beginning walking to the front door, letting the pill on his tongue begin to dissolve. Richie then smiled proudly at his best friend before

trying to catch up with him, making an absolute fool out of himself in his foot entire.

The night was only just beginning.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

again thanks for reading, leave comments and kudos or whatever youre supposed to do

and if anyone wants to know which characters are corresponded to which characters from romeo + juliet just ask and i'll let you know

### 3. Chapter 3

#### Summary for the Chapter:

Some back story behind how mike and stan know each other and bill and the boys find out something about beverly marsh

#### Notes for the Chapter:

here you have it, the long-ish awaited chapter 3

thanks as per usual to aurora for reading through and checking my grammar youre a life saver

The party was starting to get big enough to the point where people were no longer knocking on the door before letting themselves in, Mike kept finding himself looking over every time he heard the door open and people, in mid conversation and in varieties of different costumes, waltzed in. They would scan around the scene before them, walking further into the already mass amounts of college students.

He found himself whipping his head around again as three girls walked - or somewhat drunkenly stumbled- in all clad in pretty much the exact same costumes, which were clearly just clothes they'd thrown on last minute, *"Oh, i'm dressed as like a schoolgirl,"* would be their response when people would then ask them what they are supposed to be dressed as. An involuntary pout makes it way onto Mike's face as he turns his head back around, the sight of Ben who wasn't there before and now stood in front of him makes him jump slightly. With his right eyebrow raised and a smirk tugging at the corner of his mouth.

Mike sighs at Ben's mocking gaze "Am I being obvious?"

His friend lets out a hearty laugh, putting a hand on his sheriff hat before throwing his head back. Ben wasn't taking the piss, he thought it was adorable- or at least that's what he made Mike think.

“Yes, but maybe that's because *I* know why you're acting like this”, Ben watched Mike's head turn once more as the front door open; still no sign of Stan. “He's really got you smitten, hasn't he? How did this “crush” come to be in the first place? Bev said you've liked him for weeks now, but we only just got back to college this week.”

“You know how I stayed here during summer break?” Ben nods his head in understanding, “Well Stan stayed too, and that's how I met him”

---

Sometimes, Mike wondered if staying at college during summer break had been a good idea, but then when he thought about how he preferred having the option whether or not to do something other than having to help his dad at the farm. None of his housemates had stayed during the summer, or the rest of his friends, so up to this point he had been spending his summer on his own. Not that he entirely minded, it was nice and quiet, which living in a house full of six football players was a very rare occurrence. In all seriousness it felt nice to be on his own for a bit, even if he found himself rather bored some days.

He didn't have to be up this early in the morning (five am to be exact) there were no classes he had to go to after his run, however he still woke up bright and early as he preferred to run at this time of the day, where the air was a little bit cooler and most of Chicago was still asleep during the summer. When he had gotten to the park that was

only about a 7 minute jog away from college campus, it was empty, completely abandoned, and he liked it that way. It always ended up being that by the end of his run people had started to either head to work or they were out walking their dogs.

Mike ran the same route through the park everyday since freshman year, but today he felt like changing it up a bit and decided to turn right instead of left when he reached this old tree, that he often used as a little checkpoint so he knew where he was on his run. It was like an unconscious thought that drew him to go in the other direction and down a path he wasn't familiar with. So, he continued to run down this new path, when he spots something in the distance. At first, he can't quite figure out what it is. He even stops in his tracks and bends over, squinting and covering his hands to shield the rising sun from distorting his vision, yet he still can't figure it out; he was way too far to even attempt it, he starts running again, more cautiously this time, towards the mysterious thing in the distance.

The closer he got the clearer the thing was, at one point he even thought it must have been some kind of animal by the blur of a muted brown.

*Wow I really am stupid*, Mike thinks to himself when he finally comes to the conclusion it's actually a person. *But why would a person be sat up against a tree at quarter past five in the morning? Maybe it was a homeless person or something and they had slept there.* The person brings a book into their lap, seemingly skimming over the contents, but it was the pair of binoculars that had really confused Mike. *Hmm I've never seen a homeless person own a pair of binoculars before.*

Mike was now only a few minutes running distance from going straight past the person. *Should I say something to them or just keep running; should i smile? Should I stop running and just walk past instead?*

With all the worrying and thinking he was doing, he was now only about a minute from going right past the tree they were currently perched up against. He decides to just wing it, not stopping his run, but merely slowing down slightly.

“Good Morning!” Mike says with a pleasant smile. *Maybe I said that too cheerfully.*

The persons head whips up, eyes slightly bulged from the apparent but obvious scare Mikes presence had sent them in. It was a boy seemingly his age. His almost tight ringlet curls bouncing at his own sudden movement. Eyes soften as he blushes slightly in embarrassment “Oh, good morning.” He sends a gentle smile back towards Mike, lowering his head again and continues looking at the contents of his book.

*There was no way that was a homeless person. No homeless person looks that clean and neat.* Mike wonders if he’s always been here, if that every single morning when he has gone on a run early in the morning and followed the left path, that *this guy* had be down the right path with his books and binoculars and perfectly pressed clothes and caramel curls.

The next day, following his usual routine, Mike went on a run at 5 am. However, he didn't keep to the routine entirely as he found himself going down the right path by the old tree again. He wanted to see if that guy would be there again this morning, and he was, so they exchanged “Good morning,” and Mike continued walking just as the guy had gone back to whichever book he was reading today.

This then became Mike's new routine, which he continued to follow for the next week, during the week he had text Bev telling her about what had happened and these "moments" between him and this stranger, and how this stranger was extremely attractive.

"Have you spoken to him?" She asked him over the phone, on one their regular phone calls over the summer. When Mike had proclaimed that he had, she then went to ask him what specifically had they spoken about.

"Well, I mean we just say "good morning" to each other," He knew that wasn't what Bev meant at all, but he *had* spoken to him it just hasn't really been about anything in particular.

"Mike," She said in a knowing tone. "You should talk to him. You talk to me about him enough, considering you don't even know his name."

He wants to talk to this mysterious pretty boy; he wants to know what his name is, he wants to know why he's up at 5 am and what exactly it is he's doing. Actually, he doesn't really know why he hasn't spoken to him yet, it's not like he finds it hard to talk to people. He's an extrovert, and he loves talking to people, so why can't he muster up the courage to talk to this stranger?

When he finally builds up the courage, and proclaims to himself that today is the day, he takes the right path, but as he comes to the part of his run where the boy is usually sat- he isn't there. Maybe he's moved base camp, he did it a few days ago and Mike had reacted the exact same way as he was now. So, he continued his run, but by the time he got to the end of it he hadn't spotted the boy once. He tried not to dwell on it much and let it affect his day, but in the end, his



mutual greeting every morning with the stranger had always put him in a good mood.

The day after, he contemplated going down the left path again, and going back to his original routine because maybe the boy wasn't there again today. Yet, he bit the bullet and went down the right path, there was no harm in doing so, if he wasn't there, he wasn't, *no biggie*

He was.

There he was, sat in his usual spot again, with his binoculars and his book and it was like he hadn't totally just not showed up yesterday. Mike could hear Bev telling him *"You should talk to him,"* playing on a loop in his head, the closer he got the slower he ran until he was merely just walking towards the boy. His nose was stuck in his book like usual and Mike assumed that he didn't even know he was stood in front him of him.

*Okay, I'm going to speak to him .*

Clearing his throat slightly before speaking "Didn't see you yesterday," It appeared as though just like the first time he had said "good morning" to him, it startled the other boy, causing his to bring up his head so fast Mike was sure it would give him whiplash.

The boy, opens his mouth for a second but no sound comes out as if too in shock before clearing his own throat. "Y-yeah, it was a Saturday, so I was at temple". It seemed as if he knew that Mike was next going to ask him why he wasn't at temple last week, so he saves his waste of breath and just continues.

"I don't go every week, I just kind of go when I want to. Being away from my dad gives me that freedom and flexibility to only have to go when I feel like it," As he explains Mike's mouth forms and 'O' shape in understanding.

"Is it why you've decided to stay here for the summer, assuming you go to the University, otherwise I've made a bit of a fool out of myself." He laughs awkwardly.

"I do, yeah. I study Law," Mike lets out a whistle and gives him a wide eyed look as if to say *you're brave*. "I know, I know, and yes that's why I've decided to stay for the summer, kind of predictable, huh?" Mike shrugs his shoulders and gestures to the patch of grass beside the other boy who then scoots over to make space for him.

So, Mike sits down next to the boy he soon discovers is called Stan Uris. Where he, in return of their introduction, then declares that he's Mike Hanlon. Stan's face lights up in familiarity to the name, professing that he the captain of the football team. Mike looks down shyly at the fact Stan knows of his name and who he was.

"My—" Stan looks down and fiddles with the corner of one of the pages, as if he were struggling to decide what word to say next. "My best friend is also called Mike," Mike senses some kind of tension in the air, not really understanding why Stan had decided to make a comment like that, so he just says "Oh, right." followed by him quickly changing the subject so that they both feel more comfortable again.

They then spend the next 45 minutes just talking about their

summers, and Mike asks what's with the binoculars and the books. To which Stan opens up his book which is filled with pictures and information on a very large variety of birds, he then reveals- with a faint flush in his cheeks- that the reason Mike always see him every morning at 5 AM is because he birds watches.

It was obvious by the look on his face and the slight hesitation when telling Mike that he was embarrassed by his hobby and probably hadn't told many people about it. It was then Mike's job to reassure Stan that it was nothing to be embarrassed about and that he actually found the hobby *adorable* , that was the word that he had used, at least.

This then became the *new* new routine, the past one of them only greeting each other was now replaced by about fifteen to almost forty-five minutes one day of pleasant conversation each morning before Mike then, uses the palm of his hand to help lift himself up, while dusting off any of the muck or pieces of grass on his legs, and jogs away.

This also lasted around a week and half before the summer was finally coming to an end and some of his football team and friends had started coming back and joining him in of his morning jogs; where he then took the left path again. Leaving Stan to now wonder where Mike Hanlon was and why he no longer came this way. He thought that maybe as Mike's teammates were filtering back to University towards the end of this summer, that he didn't want to run this way anymore because he didn't, in any way, want to be associated with Stan.

It was a stupid thought to have, and Mike gave off the impression that he wasn't that type of guy, but he couldn't help but feel that way; probably due to his extreme self-hatred which he then projected onto

thinking everyone else disliked him as much as he disliked himself too, that a popular guy at his University, probably– *the* most popular guy–wouldn't want to actually be friends with the mess of a boy man that was Stanley Uris.

Little did he know that not only did he want to be friends with him, he had personally asked *his* friends, if Stan was going to come to his party tonight. He figured Mike actually went out of his way to find his group of friends, and he couldn't lie if he said he didn't feel good about himself at that.

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A more shortened version, also excluding Stan's thoughts obviously, was told by Mike Hanlon to Ben Hanscom. Who had listened intently to what he then called a cute little 'summer romance'. Mike shushed his ridiculousness with a menacing, yet still fond, glare saying that he was going to check up on everyone who was already here. Ben was now offering to greet or "keep watch" for if Stan and his friends show up.

As Ben watched Mike walk into a crowd of people, the door opened yet again, but it still wasn't Stan. One of them he had recognised immediately as Bill Denbrough, they had come across each other during first year and by come across, they had gone on a blind date. Followed by one or two more.

Nothing really ended up happening between them other than those dates, not that anything was necessarily bad about the dates, they just didn't have *that* connection. So they went about their separate ways and so Ben remained single: only being a *little* salty about it.

Although, they both still took the time to smile at one another if they somehow crossed paths around campus. Dustin ended up being thoroughly upset that his match making skills weren't as up to scratch as he had thought.

\*

“Bill, hey!” Bill followed the voice seeing Ben Hanscom, who was walking up to him, waving.

Somehow, he had totally forgot that this was literally Ben's house, he'd only been here once before that though, so he wasn't kicking himself too hard at the fact he forgot. “Hey!” He replied as Richie gives him a nudge as if to say *introduce me, then*.

“Oh! This is my friend Richie. Richie, this is Ben Hanscom” Richie's eyebrows furrow and he mouths Ben's name a few times, as if he was trying to remember where he's heard it before. A look of realisation and surprise appears on his face. “You're Ben? Well, it's only taken nearly two years for us to meet”

Ben takes Richie's hand bending over slightly as he kissed his knuckles “How you doing m'lady”

Richie pretends to act bashful before breaking out of character again with a roar of laughter. He turns to his best friend, pointing at Ben, before enthusiastically declaring “He's funny! I like him, you really missed out, Denbrough.”

They both wave off his comment and Bill and Richie walk past Ben saying a simple 'See ya later', as they both start walking further into the party, their legs began to feel heavy as if they had bricks tied to their feet. Richie actually looks down at his feet for a second to make sure that his high heeled shoes weren't actually made of concrete. He then lifts his head and he swears he can literally *feel* his pupils dilate, Richie looks at Bill to see him looking at him exactly the same way, his eyes so dilated their almost black.

"These drugs are quick" Bill whispers, but Richie can't tell what he's said, all he can focus on is Bill's lips moving but he can't quite make out the words that left them. Everything becomes contorted as they move around, all the people began to mix together becoming some kind of large, jittering blur. With extreme difficulty they find Lucas and Dustin in the crowd, who had already been looking at them. Lucas wore a disapproving expression while Dustin just beamed at them.

Bill couldn't tell you what they were all talking about because honestly he was too high. He didn't know what sentences were coming out of his mouth. For all he knew they couldn't have been words at all and he wouldn't have noticed any different. At one point during their conversation about whatever it was, he turns his head for a second, going back to their conversation only to then double take. He stops engaging fully on the conversation when he realises he's spotted Beverly Marsh dressed as what seems to be-

"Is she dressed as Han Solo?" Dustin asks, they all turned to see what had captured Bill's attention.

"Well, that's ballsy," Richie speaks up, Lucas looks at him with his face scrunched up in confusion. "Richie, you're quite literally dressed as a woman." Richie lifts up a finger and shoves it onto Lucas mouth shushing him, all the while not turning his eyes away from Bev. It was almost weird how much her costume looked good on her, especially the hair which *really* suited her. As they all marvel at her immaculate outfit, they watch her face light up as someone sort of skips towards her dressed as princess Leia. That someone was none other than Jane Hopper.

She wraps her arms around Bev, pecking her on the lips and snuggling into her side instantly.

All four boys' jaws drop in a mixture of shock and disbelief; gobsmacked. Richie looks at Bill, who looks at him back, they both have the same look on their faces, so *they* both saw the same thing. There was a telepathic conversation between them, both of them wondering if they were seeing this right now or was this the drugs; the chemicals were still manipulating their senses. They then both looked at Dustin and Lucas who trained their eyes away to look at them, so they had seen it to. That had actually happened right now.

*Oh.*

To say that Bill wasn't a little butthurt, would be lying, although it wasn't an extreme crush, it was a crush nonetheless. If you had a *teeny* crush on someone and you found and they were in a relationship, you have to admit, you would be a bit upset too. He wants to turn away, for one, he didn't exactly want to be seeing it, and two, if they turned around to see four men gawking at them, he was sure it wouldn't make them particularly comfortable. But for some reason he, or the other three, didn't turn away. Bill feels, what he knows as Richie's because of how ghostly pale the skin tone is, an

arm flung around him.

“That’s fucking hot.” Dustin wacks his arm “ *Richie*, ” he says in a warning tone.

Richie’s arm, the one that wasn’t draped around Bill, gets flung into the air. “What?” He exclaims defensively. He moves his face closer to Bill’s ear “Sorry though, Big Bill. I mean she gave off the vibes, but I had no idea she’d actually *be* a lesbian”. That earns him another smack on the arm followed by Richies whining, clearly not seeing any problem in what he spilling out of his mouth; as per usual.

Bill turns abruptly, facing away from Bev and her girlfriend, and draws the attention of the rest of his group onto him. Waving off all of their concerned looks, “I’m fine, I’m fine. She looks happy, I’m glad,” It feels as though that the high is starting to wear off a bit; he feels like it was due to the sudden mood change.

“I’m gonna go get us some drinks,” They all nod and he makes his way towards the kitchen. Both Lucas and Dustin try yelling that Bill had not taken their empty blue solo cups, but he can’t hear them. The high hasn’t worn off as much as he thought, he feels blood drumming in his ear, suddenly becoming really hot. It felt like he was sweltering in heat, as if he had just stepped into a sauna.

It’s too hot. *It’s too hot.*

There’s a downstairs bathroom on the way to the kitchen and he hopes that no one is inside, he turns the handle preparing himself incase he happened to walk in someone. Who could be doing a



number of things.

He couldn't help but sigh in relief at the sight of the empty bathroom, closing the door and locking it behind him. Not that he necessarily needed to, but the heat was becoming too much and the people were just radiating it, he feels like he would pass out if someone walked in on him in the bathroom bringing in the heat with them.

The music thumping and the drumming of the blood in his ears mixed together, reminding him just why he didn't do drugs regularly like many people they knew. These moments where you were still high but your mind was sober. You just wanted it to stop, but it doesn't. This never happened to Richie, he was always fine from start to finish.

*"Dickhead,"* Bill thought out loud.

He fiddled with the plug socket, sticking it in the hole in the sink, his shaking hand turning on the cold tap. When it was filled up enough he immediately stuck his face into the water, the sounds just stopped. The drumming and the thumping drowned out and the water chilled his skin and the heat drained from his body.

With a gasp, he lifts his head back up, the thumping comes back to life, but the drumming has subside and his breathing calms. He then runs a hand through his hair, smoothing water into it and slicking it back slightly. He gazes at himself in the mirror, as if to focus on something and check that everything was back to - well somewhat-normal.

He unlocks the door, turns the handle, and exits the bathroom.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

thanks for reading, i guess this may be counted as a bit of a slow burn fic although its happening all in one night its very dragged out so i can get a fic out of it and so i can focus on like all the characters. i swear bill and stan will be meeting soon (within the next 2 chapters)

also i couldnt help myself with making there be a history between bill and ben (i ship too many ships)

leaves kudos and comments and whatever is you do if you like something (if you liked it)

## 4. Chapter 4

### Summary for the Chapter:

a little insight and attention to the already existing couples in this AU

and two people finally meet

### Notes for the Chapter:

i havent updated this in over a months oops sorry i had a bit of writers block but im back, i tink this may be the longest chapter so far actually

i hope this is worth the wait to the people who actually read this

as per usual big thanks to rory for beta reading and editing this for me so it makes me sense and the grammar isnt shit

“There you go, your prefered poison for the night,” Lucas lifts up the the blue solo cup off the counter and moves his arms towards Dustin, he shakes it a little when Dustin still hasn't taken it from his grasp. He looks up to see his boyfriend looking in the direction of the front door, which couldn't be seen clearly from the kitchen but Dustin was looking out to see Bill and Richie in the crowd.

“They're kinda taking a while, do you think they're alright?” Dustin asks, an ounce of concern detected in his voice, he’s usually the more concerned one out of two when it came to anything really, but especially their other friends.

Lucas’ face remains emotionless, almost unimpressed, not at Dustin of

course—he could never be unimpressed at Dustin—more so the shift of conversation on to their idiotic of best friends. He takes Dustin's hand, opening up his palm and placing his drink in his hand himself.

“They're both big boys, I'm sure they're fine, and if they aren't that's their own fault,” He pulls the tap of the keg to fill up his own cup. If it isn't obvious, Lucas isn't exactly supportive of their ‘annual’ antics; but he *is* glad that it's just that: annual. At least, he very much hopes it is, and that they haven't lied to him because he would be *rather* pissed off, because then it would confirm that they really have no sense of self control, and they really are fucking idiots.

Doing drugs, like the snorting, smoking, or pill-popping kind, definitely wasn't his thing, not that he had tried it in the first place; he didn't have to try it to know it was a bad idea. He actually tried to talk Bill and Richie out of it at last year's party, but it didn't work, so he just walked off and left them to it. And that's exactly what he decided to do this year, minus the incessant complaining. Dustin isn't keen on it either, having done his own massive amount of reading up on drugs on the internet and came to a conclusion that it's a risk he is not willing to take.

Bill and Richie were a bit more... reckless, especially when they're together. If anything, they make each other ten times worse, which is something that the other two boys have to put up with. Sometimes, it felt more like babysitting than just hanging out like a typical group of best friends.

Dustin couldn't help, in his worrying state, but wonder what drug it was they had taken this time. He doubts Richie had any idea what he bought, but it would be helpful to know what they took, so if anything bad happened, but Dustin hoped it wouldn't come to that, it hasn't yet, so fingers crossed.

"I don't wanna talk or think about those two until they actually come in here," Lucas says in a joking way, but there's a little truth to words. Dustin smiles at him. They both take a sip of their drinks and Lucas grabs his hand again before he moves the two of them out of the kitchen and back into the living room, into a small unoccupied space.

Making a noise as if he has something to say, Lucas takes another sip of beer, he lowers his cup and looks at Dustin. "Please try and go easy tonight."

A weird look makes its way onto Dustin's face at Lucas's words. "What are you talking about?" Which earns him a look from his boyfriend as if to say *you know exactly what im talking about* , but Dustin face continues to be riddled with confusion.

"With the drinking" He makes a disgusted sound before continuing "Oh my god I sound like I'm talking to Bill and Richie" The both of them share a laugh at that.

"Before you say anything else, I know, I know I got carried away at the last party. But in my defense it *was* a dare, the forfeit could have been ten times worse"

*Dustin, who didn't ever get really drunk, at least drunk enough to never remember anything the next day, woke up one morning after a party before the start of summer vacation with no recollection of what had happened the previous night. A weird smell he couldn't quite place seemed to cling to his clothing and hair and after a few torturous minutes his hungover mind seemed to place it as the smell of pond water.*

*He found out not long afterwards it was in fact “lagoon” water not pond water, after a rather unimpressed Lucas has told him once he had come out of their bathroom and seen that Dustin was now awake. Reciting the story of the night before, it had appeared that Dustin had gotten extremely drunk playing multiple rounds of Beirut, obviously against people who really knew how to throw a ping pong ball into a plastic cup. He then decided to join in a game of truth or dare while Lucas had gone to wait in line for the bathroom and Bill and Richie were god knows where doing god knows what.*

*Lucas told him that by the time he had come out of the bathroom almost everyone was leaving out the front door in one massive stampede and because he couldn't find any of his friends he followed. Followed all the way to Washington Park, which was about a 5 minute walk from where the guy hosting the party lived and about a 20 minute walk away from the University itself. The crows lead him right to Washington Lagoon, he had no idea why they were there and couldn't see over everyone with him being right at the back. He spotted Bill with some girl up against a tree, doing what looked like sucking the souls out of each other through their mouths.*

*Interrupting them, he asked Bill if he knew where Dustin and Richie were, to which Bill shrugged and just turned his head back around and carried on, Lucas rolling his eyes and sighing before walking away and leaving them to it. He made his way further into the crowd, finally spotting Richie and when he asked him the same question he had asked Bill, all Richie did was point ahead of him. Lucas followed his gaze to see Dustin in front of everyone, naked, and mere seconds away from jumping right into the water, both him and Richie started to quickly make their way to the front but not in time to stop Dustin from pathetically diving right in.*

*Dustin could not swim, his friends knew that, so it was a very stupid thing for him to do. If it had not been for Lucas and Richie being there, no one*

would have known that and Lucas wondered how long it would have taken everyone's drunk ass to realise that he was drowning. They got him out of the water nearly almost as soon as he went in. Richie, took off his own ugly 90's patterned shirt and wrapped it around Dustin, gathering up his clothes off the floor and trying to help him into them while Lucas shouted at everyone else to "Piss off!".

*People, not willing to question the guy shouting in front of them, started walking back until everyone but them were left, and Bill, who was still with that girl up against the tree and didn't seem to have noticed anything that had just happened until it was now practically quiet.*

Story was: Dustin got dared to strip and jump into Washington Lake Lagoon, to which he stupidly did and Lucas got mad at everyone for making him do it and mad at him because he knew he didn't know to swim and if it happened at another time of the year he could have gotten dangerously ill. Although it was usually the two of them to look after Bill and Richie, sometimes Lucas had to make sure that Dustin was safe, he knows that Lucas bringing this up wasn't needed, and that it was probably more in the terms of it was now something to laugh about, Lucas was still pretty serious.

Dustin looks into the deep sienna that were Lucas eyes; they were full of nothing but concern, compassion and solemnity. Lucas always gets told by others that he's rude, and inconsiderate because of the way he speaks and handles things. Like how he shouted at him for jumping into the water, but it was because he cared about Dustin. In all honesty, he's one of the best people Dustin has ever met, probably *the* best. He cares so deeply, but it comes across in ways that people don't seem to understand.

"I love you," Dustin's speaks up after a few beats of silence between them, it was random and Lucas still hasn't replied to what he had said

just a few seconds ago but he felt a sudden urge of softness over his caring and charming boyfriend. The two of them were not a couple that threw around this term often, as said before, Lucas shows that he cares in different ways and constantly saying *I love you* wasn't one of them, so, it means a lot more when either of them said it to the other.

Lucas says it back to him and grins, kissing him on the lips softly, when he pulls away Dustin speaks up again. "If I was going to get drunk and strip down again, I'd make sure you were there for the whole thing" He's obviously joking and Lucas knows it so he responds by rolling his eyes and saying "*ha ha*" sarcastically.

Now that they were in the living room, they had a clearer view of the front door, which has opened conveniently; Bill and Richie both their way stumble in and get approached by Ben Hanscom, who was actually a friend of Dustin's.

Dustin and Ben were library buddies the both of them loving to research and read and also helped out there quite a bit which was how they knew each other, sometimes even Ben's best friend Mike would join them, who also seemed to show an interest in the same topic; although, he knew he shouldn't have. Dustin thinks the stereotypes of them both being on the football team would make them cocky (and kinda dumb) but he's surprised in realising they both had such interest in literature and facts. This was all in freshman year, and the more he got to know Ben, the more he liked him and thought about how Bill would appreciate his love for literature since Bill's aspiring to become a writer himself. That's what lead to him setting the two of them up; it was a failed attempt, but at least he tried, and it didn't seem like they ended up hating each other. Although, he doesn't think he's actually seen them talk to each other since freshman year.



In spite of the fact that Bill was currently high and Richie was also there, being.. well *Richie*, they looked good together. But Bill has said, many times in fact, that the two of them wouldn't work out. Dustin frowns to himself at the thought before dismissing quickly.

Both Dustin and his boyfriend watch the two say goodbye to Ben and make their way into the crowd in search of their friends since they haven't seemed to have spotted them yet. One moment they are walking, and they next they both stop dead in the tracks, and their expressions seem to change. Their eyes completely glaze over and their bodies slump a little, as if they've just lost all sense of control. A tut could be heard leaving Lucas as he watched them.

"Here we go."

---

It seems as though the second that Jane walked into the house, she managed to spot Beverly, as if she had some super senses in which she could detect her girlfriend in a room that was so full of people it would have taken anyone else a good few minutes before spotting her.

"It's the gaydar," Max whispers down to Eddie who's been wondering just how Jane spotted her girlfriend so quickly. He makes an " *Ahhh* " sound in apprehension at the same time Jane shrieks with excitement and runs off leaving the rest of their group to watch her.

"She's so different now that she has a girlfriend, I dont think I like it," Mike declares as he looks at his best friend through narrow eyes.

Stans immediately quips back at him “So you don't like to see her happy?” Mike just rolls his eyes at his comment and decides to be mature, though it only lasts a second, and doesn't respond. He makes a clicking sound with his mouth ending in a sigh, “Welp, I'm gonna wait with you guys to see this one off until Mike Hanlon comes to pick him up, despite his protests of not wanting to be seen with me.”

Stan shoots metaphorical daggers out of his eyes at Mike. Eddie looks up at him, his voice showing that what he was saying had been said, if not only similarly, before “Stop talking about Stanley like he's an object, Michael.”

*If he only knew, Stan thinks. That's all I am to him.*

Mike holds up his hands defensively not wanting to piss off the tiniest member of their group, his size should not be used as a form to underestimate him, Eddie could get *pretty* angry if pushed hard enough (meaning not that hard). They drop back down to his sides as he starts to walk backwards, stepping further away from Eddie and towards the direction of the kitchen, which he says he's going to now to get everyone a drink.

\*

Jane's heart can't help but swoon as she moves towards her girlfriend, who she begged and begged to dress like Han Solo as soon as Bev told her about the party, and there was a slight possibility it was going to be fancy dress. Which was about two weeks before summer break had even started.

*“Please, please, please,” Jane chanted, her hands clasped together in plea as Beverly sat at her windowsill applying her bare minimum makeup for*

*her morning class. If Beverly was still in bed with her she would have pulled her into her body and squeezed her tightly, hoping it would help her get her own way.*

*“I regret even telling you it’s probably going to be a fancy dress party now,” Beverly replied as she applied some chapstick; Cherry Coca Cola to be specific, Jane’s favourite soda. She hears Jane whine into her pillow childishly, despite being in her twenties, she still acted like a child sometimes, and a petulant one at that. Beverly usually found it funny, though. And cute, very cute.*

*Sighing, but her face plastered in a smirk, she turned around to look at Jane, who still had her face smooshed into the pillow, her brown curls splayed out around some curls still resting in between her shoulder blades. It was that moment, right there, that Beverly Marsh admitted defeat to Jane Hopper.*

*“Alright,”*

*Beverly can see Jane shift slightly, as if to get up, but keeping her head in the pillow, she could just about make out the word “What?” that was muffled by the fabric and feathers.*

*“I said, alright,” Now that Jane knew for sure that was what Bev said, her face shot up and her eyes sparkled brightly with accomplishment and excitement, with a smile to match. She really had Beverly wrapped around her finger, and although she hated to admit it sometimes, she was a hopeless romantic and so she didn’t even mind that she was so willing to do pretty much anything for her girlfriend.*

*She continues, "And I'll even spend the summer making the costumes for us." That there was a prime example; she could have easily just bought them both online, where they would be made so poorly made from cheap fabric and probably would have been ripped somehow by the end of the night, not that it really would have mattered that much anyway, they were only going to be wearing the costumes for a night, and they would most likely be stuffed into the bottom of their wardrobe and be never worn again, yet, Beverly had offered to take time out of her summer to make them proper costumes because, well, she was smitten and really did want nothing but the best for the love of her life.*

*If it was even possible, Jane's smile widens, she would definitely try to protest and declare they should just buy them online, but she knows that Bev would argue and insist that she makes them. Also, maybe she was hoping that she would offer.*

*"Will, you watch the movies over the summer too," she's beginning to push her luck now, it's been something she's begged her girlfriend to watch since they've known each other. Obviously, by the fact she was asking now, it had been a failed accomplishment. The same excuse was that it wasn't her cup of tea and even after Jane would cross her arms and sulk it never managed to work.*

*It was just her luck that she, someone who hated Star Wars, would ended dating a girl with an unhealthy obsession with it. Guess, there was the line between pretty much anything and anything, when it came in regards to what she would do for her, and it was that.*

*Beverly makes a face, as if she was questioning it in her head before she turns back around, looks herself in the mirror one more time before standing up and grabbing her bag that sat by the bedside table. She walks back over to Jane who's still waiting for her response, using her puppy dog eyes to make it more convincing. Beverly bends down and kisses her*

*sweetly on the lips.*

*“I’ll try, baby,” She said just as she pulled away and proceeded to stand up and walk out of their dorm to go to her class, but not before looking back and winking as she shut the door behind her. Subconsciously, Jane licked her lips and she could taste the hint of the Cherry Cola chapstick, she looked down into her lap and smiled bashfully.*

*Jane was smitten too, and very much so.*

She shrieks again in delight at her girlfriend’s amazing Han Solo costume, it was the first time she’s seen it since Beverly refused to let her see it before tonight. It was even better than her outfit, which she thought would be impossible and yet here they were. Bev had also styled her hair like Han’s too, and must have taken a while to brush out her curls and try to work with them and hope that they would do as she wanted. Jane, who also had unruly locks, had dealt with the struggle too and was thankful that Eddie could style her hair perfectly into the symmetrical space buns.

They have to be the hottest couple there, by far. Jane knows that if there had been a competition they would win for sure. She wishes she could request a competition now; she can’t help it, she loves to win.

“You look so amazing, kinda wish I’d made that bikini instead though,” Beverly says smugly. Jane wants to reply, to tell her to shut up, but she knows it’ll come out all squeaky and stupid, so she opts for just shaking her head and letting out a sarcastic laugh to cover up her sheepishness.

“Can I just say that hair suits you so well, you have to wear it like that more often.”

“I seem to be getting that compliment a lot tonight, maybe I will,” They both smile at each other and Beverly squeezes her into her side more. “Where are your friends?”

“Oh,” Jane looks behind her and then around the room before spotting them a little further back near the entrance of the front door. “They’re just over there.” She points towards them until Beverly can spot them as well, by then the people had naturally stepped out of the way so they made eye contact with them. They all waved at each other before Jane and Bev once again turn in to each other.

“They don’t mind me sticking with you, so you have me for the whole night.”

“Good.”

\*

Once the both girls turn around, Mike lets out a huff which Stan rolls his eyes at. He really didn’t understand his deal most of the time. It was as if he was so reluctant for any of his friends to know and be friendly with other people. Which is ridiculous and literally impossible, unless Mike would go so far as to lock them away from the rest of the world.

He didn't know whether he was possessive or jealous or whatever, but it's one of his least favouring qualities (it could be argued he had a lot of those, depending on who you spoke to) and it's annoying. A lot of the time Stan has to tell himself to chill with the hatred on Mike, but he had all summer to build up his rage and it's not like he didn't have a right to be mad at him in any way.

This was one of those moments where he just had to shake his head and hope those thoughts just went away, they just made him anxious and he knows it would just be a downward spiral from there. He coughs, announcing that he's about to speak and begins to walk backwards.

"I'm just going to grab another drink, and one for Mike, the other one, for when I see him." The rest of his group all nod and huddle together closer so that they won't lose each other if they were spread too far apart. None of them had asked for another one, so Stan assumes he drinks his faster than everyone else.

Stan turns around fully and begins to walk straight on so he can see where he is going, and make his way to what he thinks is the kitchen. This is the way that Mike walked, meaning it's most definitely the right direction. Another drink might aid in cooling his nerves, and he isn't the designated driver tonight, that was Max, so he didn't have to worry about slowing down; although, he still wants to make sure that he doesn't get smashed, especially if a guy that might like him invited him and wants to see him tonight. Even though Stan goes to very few parties, every one he went to he would let loose, get drunk, like *really drunk*, and ends up doing something humiliating that causes him to remember the next morning exactly why he doesn't go to parties.

Therefore, he has to remind himself to limit his drinking and not go

overboard. He's sure Mike will want to hold a coherent conversation with him and maybe even want to dance (which made Stan anxious enough because he can't dance to save his life) “ *maybe more, what the fuck do I do if he wants to hook up or something*” okay, now that made him *really* anxious.

With his fast and nerving thoughts flying through his head, it was as if he was unable to even focus on making his way to the kitchen. He could see, and he was still walking but it was like his body was just moving, his thoughts took up 100% of his attention and his body relied completely on instinct. His eyes aren't focused on anything specific which, in turn, means he isn't exactly looking where he's going. And, just Stan's luck, he runs into someone.

It startles him, the impact causes him to lose his balance and start to fall backwards. He still can't quite manage to gain control of his limbs in time to try and stop himself from falling onto the floor in front of everyone. Luckily for him, the person he had ran into must have been at least more alert than himself as they grabbed onto him before it was too late. The person had a hold of Stan's left upper arm and his waist and had pulled him into their body to stabilise the both of them from toppling over.

Stan's own hands had grabbed onto the person's shoulders, underneath his fingertips he can feel a cool plastic. He's almost thankful for it because he can feel it through his chest as well, somehow even through the thick material, as their bodies were flushed together, it seems to calm him down. But when he finally looks up at the person who he bumped into, his hearts starts beating rapidly again.

He meets a pair of wide eyes the colour of ocean blue, Stan's internal monologue scoffs at his cliché and cringey description of them “ *you*



*could have at least mentioned the little flecks of slate grey or maybe that they were even bluer than ocean blue, more like a cerulean blue*” but maybe the fact that was his immediate thought afterwards was worse; that and how he bothers so much to go into further descriptions.

“S-sorry, I should have checked to see if anyone was cuh-coming before I just b-b-barged out the bathroom,” It was a soft voice accompanied by a stutter, kind of like a nervous tick since he could hear the worry on his voice. It was obvious by the furrow in his brows, one of which was patchy and had what seemed to most likely be a scar running down through the middle of it.

Stan had spends too long staring and actually forgets to reply, only noticing once the other guys eyebrows were now just raised as if to say “ *are you going to say something or* ,” For a second, Stan feels like he might have actually forgotten *how* to talk, it seems as if just looking at this guy knocks more wind out of him than walking into him did.

“Oh, it’s fine, I wasn’t looking where I was going, so it’s probably my bad.”

“Let’s just say it was both of our bads,” The guy offers and Stan can’t help but chuckle nervously, it’s a genuine laugh but being so close to this guy seems to make him a puddle of nerves. They don’t say anything for, what feels like, half an hour but was more realistically like a minute, the both of them just looking at each with this guys arms still around Stans waist.

Surprisingly, it’s Stan to remove his hands from his shoulders first, the other guy seeming to get the jist, removing his arm from his waist

and takes a step back, immediately going to scratch the back of his neck, in that cliché straight guy way when they talk to girls they find hot or when their pea sized brains can't think of anything else to say.

Although, Stan isn't a hot girl, so it was probably the latter, not saying that this guy had a pea sized brain or anything. Stan was glad he isn't actually saying this outloud or he may have just offended a stranger big time. The silence between them continues and Stan can't help but shift uncomfortably on his feet, it was like the both of them want to say something, but can't because of the awkwardness. There's an extreme amount of tension between two people who had just met each other, a tension that he had only really experienced one other time, in a much similar way but the outcome of the whole thing had been something he never wanted to experience again. Which is what caused him to again be the first to initiate something between the two, to remove himself from the situation.

“Sorry again, and thanks for not letting me fall onto my ass.” The end of his sentence makes the other guy laugh and his eyes crease and scrunch up, it's cute, but it's a little too hard of a laugh for something that isn't that funny, and the guy seems to think so too and he stops laughing almost immediately and coughs as soon as he realises that he laughed for too long.

“R-Right, you're welcome.”

As Stan starts to sidestep in the direction of the kitchen, the guy moves out of his way and throws out his arm, gesturing for Stan to go, simultaneously bowing his head like he was in the presence of royalty.

It takes everything in Stan not to look back once he starts walking

again, but only a few steps later he heard the guy shout, “Oh! Sorry, a-again.”

That gives him the excuse to look back, and he did. The guy hasn’t moved since their encounter, Stan gives a small smile in return and turns back around. Just like before, his thoughts were a bit preoccupied, so once he got into the kitchen his brain completely blanks and for a moment he even forgets why he came here.

“ *Drinks. What does Mike drink? What do I drink?*” The kitchen is probably one of the busiest rooms in the house right now; the space itself is massive (the whole house was massive, a typical frat house) and because the party has only just started everyone was getting drinks all at once. Stan opts for getting a beer for Mike, he assumes that’s probably what he drinks at parties. It’s a staple alcohol for college parties. That and jungle juice, which is dangerous, Stan discovers, since you can’t taste any of the alcohol, and there was a *lot* of it, so you usually drink more than you’re supposed to.

The keg that stands in a massive bucket of ice is intimidating, he has no idea how to work it and is certainly too chicken to ask anyone. He won’t even attempt it on his own because he knows if he tries, he will somehow do it wrong and end up humiliating himself in front of a bunch of popular college students.

Getting his own drink first and then hopefully being able to find a can of beer seems like a better option. A massive assortment of alcohols are all spread out along the countertop, maybe finding his own drink is going to be difficult as well. He doesn’t go out enough to have a drink that’s his *signature* drink; one that he can go back to everytime. People always get his drinks for him and he drinks whatever was handed to him which, in hindsight, isn’t exactly the best idea.

He makes his way across the counter slowly, skimming over each bottle with his fingertips and reading every label, he stops in front of a cloudy baby pink drink, the label reading *Pink Lemonade Margarita*. The name and look of it sounds good enough so he grabs a red solo cup out of the stacks that were placed all around the counter and untwisted the cap. After pouring his own, he goes on the hunt for a canned beer, which ends up being mission impossible, which makes no sense to him “ *What kind of party doesn't have cans of beer?*”

Maybe the keg was the only option, which means he has to go over and hope it's easy to work. He grabs another one of the red solo cups and walks over to the keg, which is no longer occupied like it was only a few moments ago, before he even has a chance to try and work it the cup was taken out of his hand. He almost says “ *What the fuck?*” until the stranger walks in front of him.

It's the guy from earlier.

*"Did he follow me to the kitchen?"*

Stan can interject, take the cup from him and just do it himself, but he doesn't want to. He waits patiently, holding his own drink in one hand, as the guy pours him a beer with ease, something Stan is sure would have taken him a couple more seconds to figure out. Either this guy has common sense, which Stan seems to be lacking right now, “*because your brain was so frazzled from being just touched by a hot guy, who was now pouring a drink for you. A drink that was for another guy, in which could be argued was equally as hot,*” or he's been to a lot of parties. He wants to say the latter, which *again* makes it seem like Stan thinks he's dumb.

“Here you go,” The guy straightens his back from bending over, holding out the cup for Stan to take.

Stan, using his free hand, reaches out to grab it out of the stranger’s, “I could have done that myself you know,” He remarks. Neither of them have let go of the cup even though and their hands were touching.

“Oh, I’m sure,” The other smirks, Stan doesn’t know whether to take offense or not at the tone of his voice or his facial expression. The two of them end up just looking at each other again, not saying anything and once again the tension in the air feels thick and almost suffocating. Their second interaction is cut short, not by either of them but by Eddie, who probably came to look for Stan.

His shrill and excited voice confirms that as he shouts Stan’s name once he sees him and almost *skips* over. The guy has since let go of the cup and lets his arm flop down to his side, Stan wishes he didn’t let go so soon.

“Come on! Mike Hanlon found us and he was asking about you so I had to come find you, we have to go!” Eddie grabs onto Stan’s arm, turns around and drags him with him through the crowd.

Stan takes one last glance at the attractive stranger, who’s still staring at him, before he’s pulled too far away and people start to blockade his line of vision.

### **Notes for the Chapter:**

hope that was a satisfying meet cute for yall and im sorry it took me four chapters for the main couple to

even meet each other but i gotta pace it out ya know  
again thanks for reading

**Author's Note:**

okay so that was chapter one i guess  
i dont know how anything works yet so just do what  
you usually do with fics that you like (if you liked it)

i would like to say that theres an update schedule for  
this but there it will just depend on when i finish the  
chapters so sorry in advance for that